

California Polytechnic State University

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**Warriors' President to Speak at Graduate Commencement
For Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business June 12**

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly alumnus Robert Rowell, president of the Golden State Warriors NBA team, will be the keynote speaker at the June 12 commencement ceremony for those receiving master's degrees from Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business.

Rowell is entering his second year as the Warriors' president after being promoted to that position in June 2003 by team owner Christopher Cohan. The 36-year-old native of Alton, Illinois, is the youngest executive to occupy his position in the NBA. His responsibilities include directing all aspects of the club's management team in its day-to-day business and basketball operations. He also represents the organization as a member of the NBA Board of Governors and serves as the team's NBA chief marketing officer.

He earned a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism in 1989 and a master's degree in business administration in 1993, both from Cal Poly.

Prior to joining the Warriors, Rowell worked for Cal Poly's Intercollegiate Athletics Department for six years. He spent three years (1989-91) as business manager before being promoted to assistant athletics director in 1992, and an associate athletics director in 1994. During his tenure, Cal Poly moved from an NCAA Division II athletics program to NCAA Division I-AA status.

He will speak to some 100 master's degree candidates from the Orfalea College of Business and their families and friends at 6 p.m. June 12 in the Performing Arts Center's Christopher Cohan Center.

About Robert Rowell

During his two seasons as chief operating officer with the Golden State Warriors, Rowell continued to serve as the catalyst in the Warriors steady resurgence in the Bay Area sports business community, while also playing a major role in the hiring of Special Assistant Chris Mullin and

Head Coach Eric Musselman.

Those decisions helped spark a renewed excitement of Warriors basketball, both locally and nationally, as the 2002-03 Warriors team finished with the most improved record in the NBA (17-plus wins), and Musselman finished as a runner-up for NBA Coach of the Year honors.

Rowell initially joined the Warriors management team in August of 1995 as assistant controller. He also served as director of finance/controller for two seasons. His responsibilities included handling day-to-day business operations and fiscal management of the club's renovated \$110 million arena and \$10 million practice facility.

Other business accomplishments under Rowell's leadership include:

- Expanding the club's season ticket holder base by more than 20 percent over the last three years.
- Establishing an all-time single-season franchise record in home attendance during the 2002-03 campaign.
- Increasing online sales at the Warriors' Web site (www.warriors.com) by more than 200 percent since July of 2002.
- Increasing traffic to the Warrior's Web site by 30 percent over the last year, one of the top figures in the NBA.
- Creating the "In The Paint" program to increase season ticket holder retention rates through customer service. The program calls for every employee in the organization to establish a relationship with designated season ticket holders via personal contact.
- Spearheading the creation of the marketing arm of the Warriors: Great Time Out Entertainment. The team's new branding campaign, "It's A Great Time Out," helped the Warriors earn the NBA's highest regular-season attendance increase mark (17 percent) during the 2000-01 season.

Following the 2000-01 season, Rowell was named one of Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal's Forty Under 40 Award winners from a field of 600 nominees. The annual Forty Under 40 Awards recognize the achievements of the top 40 executives in sports under the age of 40.

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